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ROUTING AND RECORD SHEET

SUBJECT: (Optional)

FROM:

CI/R+A/E

1

EXTENSION

NO.

DATE

MAR 29 11 47 AM '66

DST-14195

9 Feb 66 (17 Dec 65)

TO: (Officer designation, room number, and building)

DATE

RECEIVED

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OFFICER'S
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COMMENTS (Number each comment to show from whom to whom. Draw a line across column after each comment.)

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
SOURCES METHODSEXEMPTION 3B20
NAZI WAR CRIMES DISCLOSURE ACT
DATE 2007

FOR COORDINATION WITH

State

17 Dec 65

100-6-139/3

MAR 12 11 01 AM '80

ORIGIN/ACTION

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

AIRGRAM

DSI 14195
POL 23-6 USSR
XR PPB 9 USSR
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VIA AIR POUCH
HANDLING INDICATOR

TO : Department of State

RM/AN
ANALYSIS & DISTRIBUTION
BRANCH

3

FROM : Amembassy MOSCOW

DATE: 17 December 1965

SUBJECT: Soviet Security Organs Glorified in Ogonyok Story

REF :

In the wake of the Pravda article of 4 September 1964, which praised the wartime espionage activities of Richard Sorge, a major campaign has been noted (and reported by the Embassy under the rubric "Cult of the Spy") to improve the image of the Soviet security organs. Last week, no less than fourteen feature films and twelve documentaries were shown in Moscow theaters in a special festival of "Chekist-hero" films, and memoirs of former Soviet intelligence agents have appeared with increasing frequency in the bookstores. One of the latest of these was even reviewed on television recently by an individual in civilian clothes, identified as a worker of the organs of state security.

As reported previously, the KGB agent, who once stood in the shadows, has been officially put forward as a hero-type--intelligent, cultured, resourceful, hard-working, and, above-all, humane. The moral of the campaign for Soviet citizens is the need for constant vigilance, discretion in relations with foreigners, and assistance to the KGB in its work. The campaign also provides the public with lively entertainment, and serves as an ideologically pure substitute for the Western detective story.

A good example of recent fiction on the spy motif is the story, "The Resident Agent's Last Mistake" [Poslednyaya oshibka rezidenta], which has been serialized in the Soviet weekly Ogonyok. The reporting officer's attention was originally drawn to the story during recent trips to Arkangel'sk and Murmansk, where he observed a great number of Soviets in airplanes, waiting rooms and hotel lobbies reading it. Written by Oleg Shmelev and Vladimir Vostokov, it was published in twelve installments, the last of which appeared in the issue for the first week of December.

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Drafted by:

CONS:WTSinn:rts

Contents and Classification Approved by:

CONS:DAnderson

Clearances:

Acting DCM-Mr. Boster *MB*

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The protagonist of the piece is Mikhail Zarokov, a foreign intelligence agent secreted into the USSR for the purpose of assisting another agent to escape and to obtain samples of earth and water in the Novotrubinsk rayon. He establishes himself in the city of "N", makes contact with another agent, Yan Dembovich, and sets about attempting to recruit a Soviet citizen to assist him in accomplishing his assigned tasks. His choice falls on one Pavel Matveyev (alias Bekas [snipe]), a fugitive from justice, whose father had disappeared in 1938 during the purge. Unknown to Zarokov, however, Matveyev is actually a First Lieutenant of the KGB, Vladimir Gavrilovich Sinitayn.

The authors explain that Zarokov was born in Paris in 1922, that his real name was Tul'yev, and that his father had served in the Tsarist Foreign Ministry before finding a job in a western intelligence school. During the war, the Nazis had assumed control of the school's operations and sent him to a prison camp where he assumed the identity of a Soviet prisoner. After the war, his father and he began to work for "new bosses". Zarokov performed various assignments in Africa, Portugal, Korea, and the Near East, before being sent to the Soviet Union.

The story takes on emotional overtones when the long-lost sister of the person whose identity Zarokov assumed in the prison camp comes to light and attempts to contact him. Zarokov's solution is to enlist the services of a former Gestapo agent to murder her. However, the ever-vigilant KGB is on the job, rescues the sister, arrests the Gestapo agent, and begins to close in on Zarokov.

The action of the story began on 22 August 1961. By June 1962, Zarokov decides it is time for him to arrange for the escape of the other agent, Leonid Krug. Dembovich succeeds in obtaining passes to a health resort on the sea, and Matveyev is dispatched there with the soil and water samples to assist Krug in his escape. After a skirmish with the Soviet border patrol, Krug and Matveyev are picked up by a launch and taken to Germany, where they are housed in a villa and questioned by an American agent, Sebast'yan.

Matveyev is now in a position to show his mettle as a KGB agent. Surrounded by sinister, inhuman characters--the common Soviet stereotypes of Western intelligence operatives--he outwits a lie detector and withstands psychological torture. He is almost unmasked when the intelligence center orders another group of agents in Moscow (including the cultural attache of a Western Embassy) to obtain a second sample of earth and water from the Novotrubinsk district to compare with the one brought by Matveyev, which had been doctored by the KGB. However, the operation fails, and Matveyev is ultimately given a clean bill of health and returned to the Soviet Union by ship with instructions to assist Zarokov's escape. On 14 July 1963, Zarokov is arrested. His identity is promptly assumed by Matveyev, who, having found a secret code, resumes contact with the center in Germany and

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from MOSCOW

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continues his work as a double agent for the KGB. The authors promise to relate his further adventures in a second book on which they are now working.

Compared with the standard prosaic diet to which Soviet readers are normally subjected, "The Resident Agent's Last Mistake" is a rather interesting and entertaining piece. True, Vladimir Sinitsyn is far from being a James Bond, but his character is consistent with the authors' didactic purpose of using realism to make the story relevant to the daily lives of Soviet citizens.

For the Ambassador:

Philip H. Valdes

Philip H. Valdes
First Secretary of Embassy

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